

City of Bangor, Commission on Cultural Development
Minutes
January 8, 2015
8:30 AM
City Council Chambers

Commissioners Present: Jamie Ballinger (Chair), Kierie Piccininni (Vice Chair), Tom Avila, Judy Boothby, Mary Budd, Emily Burnham, Ulrike Guthrie, Kat Johnson, Josh Plourde, Chris Roberts, Elissa Young, and Caitlin Brooke (staff)

Guests: Kate Dickerson, Brian Hindrichs

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Judy and seconded by Josh to approve the previous meeting minutes. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

3. Review of Grant Applications

Bangor Symphony Orchestra

Brian Hindrichs presented the Bangor Symphony Orchestra's (BSO) grant application for \$5,000 to support a new and improved version of the "On the Town" series which the City helped to fund last year. The mission of the program is to get musicians into the community, add live music to events in Bangor, and expose a new audience to the BSO. The request for \$10,000 allows for the BSP to expand the programming into areas like Art Walks, the Cool Sounds Summer Concert series, Troop Greeters, and more. The proposal aligns with the Commission's recently adopted strategic plan—it helps to support endeavors into other granting sources and enhance the distinct cultural vibrancy of Bangor. The BSO wants to play a role in the visible culture of the Bangor region. They have also implemented more tracking features in this program.

Elissa asked if donations were accepted at performances? Brian indicated they were but previous attempts to collect donations had been in the form of envelopes. This year they are investing in buckets to hand around at performances to collect donations. He did note that a lot of the time the musicians are participating in another non-profit's event, so the BSO is careful not to step on any toes.

Tom requested a more detailed and robust budget. It appears that the weights of the performances are coming down to this one grant. Are there places to seek additional funding if the Commission's grant is not fully funded? Where is the BSO's buy-in? Brian replied that there is no direct funder other than the City of Bangor via the Cultural Commission. There is flexibility in what the BSO programs and the requested amount is the maximum needed to support a full year of performances.

Penobscot Theatre Company

Mary Budd presented the Penobscot Theatre Company's request to support the production "End Days." The show is the second to last in the theatre's current season and is scheduled to coincide with the Maine Science Festival. The theatre worked to choose a show that would bring to light science in everyday life, prompting community discussion around science themes. PTC is always looking for ways to bridge connections with other organizations about issues in the community.

Jamie asked about ticket prices and the pricing schedule as tickets prices can be steep. Mary noted that the prices are affordable it compared to similar for-profit endeavors. Accessibility is core to PTC's mission so

they provide discounts through programs such as Student Rush, Pay What You Can night, senior discounts, and participating in Blue Star theatres.

Tom asked why the PTC is coming to the Commission, requesting a grant that is relatively small in relation to the theatre's budget? Mary said that they feel like a forty year old cultural institution should be supported by the City. Tom noted that is something the Commission should consider when looking at grants—moving from project-based grants to a partnership grant structure.

Maine Science Festival

Festival Director Kate Dickerson summarized the planning and programming for the first annual Maine Science Festival. She explained that this festival has been in the planning phase for two and a half years. It is highlighting the world class scientists, research facilities, smaller technology companies, etc. that Maine has within its borders. The festival aims to let Maine (and beyond!) know and celebrate the greatness of science in our state. Kate is also actively trying to break down the silos between art and science. The festival currently has 70 partners and collaborators around the state.

Emily said that this grant request represents what the Commission is trying to do—integrate arts and culture into many parts of the community. She asked if the funds would go into the general budget for the festival and Kate said it would. Kate noted that the full calendar of events would be announced by mid-January.

It was voted on that Josh had a conflict of interest for the Bangor Symphony Orchestra and the Maine Science Festival; Mary had a conflict of interest for Penobscot Theatre and the Maine Science Festival; and Emily had a conflict of interest with the Penobscot Theatre. These individuals did not vote on grants in which they had a conflict of interest.

The remaining budget for the Commission's FY2015 allocation is \$7,081. It was suggested to attempt to spread the funds across all of the grant requests.

After some discussion the following allocations were made:

Maine Science Festival: \$2,000

Kierie made the motion, Judy seconded, and all were in favor.

Penobscot Theatre Company: \$1,500

Kierie made the motion, Kat seconded, and all were in favor.

Bangor Symphony Orchestra: \$2,500

Kierie made the motion, Uli seconded, and all were in favor.

4. Self-Employment Taxes and Tax Issues Workshop Update

Kierie reported that the Self-Employment Taxes and Tax Issues Workshop was a success. There were 5 Commissioners, 4 tax accountants, and 16 attendees present. Feedback was that people felt comfortable, acquired necessary information, and enjoyed the format. Areas for improvement included providing text book examples and a glossary of terms. There was a large commitment from attendees to attend the grant writing workshop in February.

Josh suggested providing a memo to Council with updates about the workshop.

5. Governance Policy Update

Caitlin reported that the Assistant City Solicitor Paul Nichols will be at February's meeting to talk about the role of the Commission and be available to answer any questions Commissioners may have.

6. Other Business

Kierie asked Commissioners that have not yet signed up for a subcommittee to do so.

- Kat - Funding, Cultural Vibrancy
- Chris – Marketing, Cultural Vibrancy
- Tom – Funding
- Judy - Cultural Vibrancy

Caitlin announced that the Maine Arts Commission is presenting its Cultural and Strategic Planning Summit on March 18. Kierie added that MAC will host a grant workshop before the Commission's next workshop on February 4.

Uli announced that Bangor Art Society is hosting a screening at the Gracie of "John Imber's Left Hand," on January 27 at 7 p.m.

On January 24 and 25, the UMaine Day of the Humanities will be in downtown Bangor.

Judy reminded everyone that the Bangor Ballet's "Cabin Fever Reliever" is this Saturday at 5 p.m. at the Gracie Theatre.

Penobscot Theatre will begin its production of "Guys on Ice" at the end of January.

UMMA's new slate of exhibitions will be opening.

His Majesty's Cabaret will have performances on February 6 & 7 at Tantrum.